



# THE VEHICLE

## Washtenaw Area Transportation Study

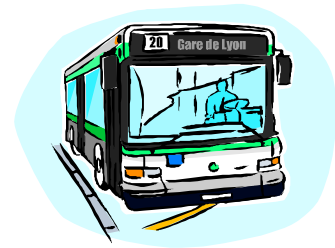
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### WASHTENAW COUNTY TRANSIT PLAN – UPDATE

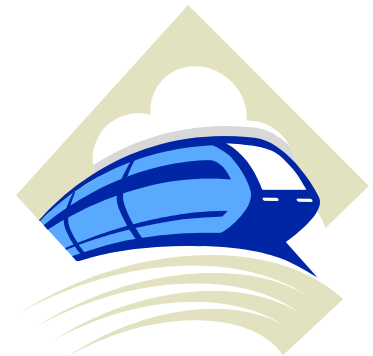
The Washtenaw County Transit Plan Steering Committee met on June 8, 2007 at the Ann Arbor DDA. Committee members discussed transit deficient areas and deficiencies within Washtenaw County. Populations and areas of interest, for transit deficiencies include, but are not limited to:

- ◆ Households with zero or 1 auto
- ◆ Households with head of household over 65 years of age
- ◆ Minority and low-income populations
- ◆ Employment
- ◆ Park & Ride lots
- ◆ Passenger rail stops
- ◆ Inter & Intra-county service



WATS will be identifying destinations, within Washtenaw County, that should be served by transit. Destinations that WATS will be specifically looking at include, but are not limited to:

- ◆ Educational Facilities
- ◆ Grocery Stores
- ◆ Post offices
- ◆ Libraries
- ◆ Human Services
- ◆ Hospitals
- ◆ Religious Facilities
- ◆ Seniors Centers
- ◆ Shopping Centers



WATS will be identifying transit deficiencies, within and between Washtenaw County and adjacent counties, and developing general recommendations for transit service. The Washtenaw County Transit Plan Steering Committee will meet in August of 2007 in order to review and comment on the deficiencies and draft recommendations.

WATS will be holding the next round of public involvement meetings for the Washtenaw County Transit Plan in the fall of 2007. At the public involvement meetings, the public will have an opportunity to comment on the deficiencies and recommendations for transit service for Washtenaw County. WATS will conduct the public involvement meetings throughout the county. Check the WATS website for future Washtenaw County Transit Plan meetings and updates.

Questions or comments about the Washtenaw County Transit Plan may be addressed to Matthew Raschke, Associate Transportation Planner at [raschkem@miwats.org](mailto:raschkem@miwats.org) or by phone at 734-994-3127.

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## WASHTENAW COUNTY 2006 TRAFFIC CRASH REPORT AND FACTS

The Traffic Crash Program report is an annual report to examine the crashes in Washtenaw County. In 2006, WATS received a full year of crash data from all participating agencies which include; Ann Arbor Police, Ypsilanti Police, Northfield Police, Pittsfield Police, Saline Police, Chelsea Police, University of Michigan Public Safety, and the Washtenaw County Sheriff. WATS scanned 7,873 of Washtenaw County's crash reports which made up nearly 76% of all Washtenaw County crashes. The data that WATS does not receive directly was added to the report using Michigan State Police data. Some highlights of the report are listed below:

- ◆ The most frequent type of crash in Washtenaw County was the single motor vehicle crash. There were 3,017 crashes of single motor vehicle representing 29% of all crashes.
- ◆ Injuries, which include fatalities, incapacitating injuries, and non-incapacitating injuries, have the highest percent of occurrence in single motor vehicle crashes. Over 9% of all the single motor vehicle crashes caused an injury. Angle crash type, which is typically where the front of a vehicle hits the side of another vehicle, had almost the same occurrence of injury as single motor vehicle at nearly 9%.
- ◆ Rear end and angle crashes most frequently occurred within urban areas, while single motor vehicle crashes more frequently occurred within rural areas.
- ◆ There were a total of 32 fatal crashes reported in Washtenaw County in 2006. Most of the fatal crashes occurred in the rural areas of the county, however, fatal crashes involving pedestrians occurred most often in the urban area.
- ◆ The total percent of fatal crashes involving driver alcohol use was 28%, while alcohol use by drivers involved in crashes represented only 2% of all crashes in Washtenaw County. There was an alcohol use of 14% for drivers involved in an injury crash.



The entire report is available at <http://www.miwats.org/crash/docs/2006/06yrend.pdf>

If you have any questions about the 2006 Traffic Crash Report please contact Eric Bomberly, Associate Transportation Planner at [bomberly@miwats.org](mailto:bomberly@miwats.org) or by phone at 734-994-3127.

### NEW WATS INTERN: NICK SAPKIEWICZ

My name is Nick Sapkiewicz and I am interning this summer with the Washtenaw Area Transportation Study (WATS). I am excited for this learning opportunity and expanding my experiences and skills while at WATS. I will be assisting with the development of the transit plan, HPMS data collection and general transportation planning in this role. I completed a BS in the Urban and Regional Planning program at Eastern Michigan University in April 2007. Upon completing my internship with WATS, I plan to stay in Southeast Michigan where I hope to find a permanent planning position.



## AATA TO CONVERT TO HYBRID ELECTRIC BUS TECHNOLOGY



Fifteen hybrid electric buses will be introduced into the Ann Arbor Transportation Authority (AATA) fleet this fall as the next step in its continuing effort to minimize negative impacts on the environment and cut operating costs.

Funding for the fifteen new buses comes from a combination of federal and state grants obtained by AATA. AATA plans to eventually replace its entire fleet with clean-air hybrid electric technology. According to AATA Manager of Maintenance Terry Black, AATA plans to receive the new buses in September and October.

“Hybrid electric buses feature a combination of a battery-powered electric motor to provide most of the power at slower speeds and a smaller, clean-diesel engine that takes over at higher speeds,” Black said. “AATA expects to use 67,600 gallons less diesel fuel, saving more than \$2.5 million in fuel costs, over the 12-year life expectancy of the vehicles.”

Transit systems across the country have found that hybrid electric bus technology improves on-road performance, delivering 50 percent better acceleration than conventional diesel buses and reducing maintenance costs by 30 to 50 percent, Black said.

Because they will burn much less fuel, the buses will contribute significantly to the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions believed to contribute to global warming. AATA anticipates a reduction in particulate matter, carbon monoxide and hydrocarbons of up to 90 percent and in carbon dioxide and nitrogen oxide of up to 50 percent.

“AATA’s new buses will run cleaner and more quietly,” Black said, “and will contribute to reducing our country’s dependence on foreign oil.”

In previous efforts to protect the environment, AATA converted its fleet to ultra low sulfur diesel fuel in 2002, four years ahead of federal requirements and to a blend of five percent biodiesel and ultra low sulfur diesel fuel earlier this year.

AATA plans to eventually convert its entire fleet to hybrid electric buses as its current buses reach the end of their life expectancy, Black said.

## CHANGES IN AATA ROUTES EFFECTIVE AUGUST 2007



AATA will implement the following service changes to six AATA bus routes effective in August 2007.

### **Route 2 Plymouth** – Weekday Evening Service

Change will be the elimination of service south of the Green Road Park & Ride lot after 7:00 p.m. weekdays. Trips from downtown which arrive at the Green Road lot after 7:00 p.m. would turn around and begin the trip back to downtown. They would not serve the south neighborhood portion of the route.

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**Route 6 Ellsworth – All Trips**

Change will be the elimination of service on Airport Boulevard and on Ellsworth Road between Airport Boulevard and South Research Park Drive. Research Park Drive and South Research Park Drive would be used on trips to and from Ann Arbor. The change to the 6 route will be to continue south on S. State St. to Ellsworth, and then left (east on Ellsworth) with the inbound route being the reverse.

**Route 7 South Main East – Sunday Service**

Change will be the elimination of service to current stops along Briarwood Circle Drive only on Sundays.

**Route 12UL Liberty University – Weekday Service**

Change will be the elimination of midday trips. Existing trips that start at West Stadium Boulevard and Pauline Street from 10:01 a.m. through 3:26 p.m. would no longer be operated.

**Route 22 North-South Connector – Weekday Evening Service**

Change will be adjustments in the weekday evening schedules to provide coordinated transfers between the South Connector and other routes at Arborland, Meijer (Carpenter Road) and Huron High School.

**The Link – Evening Service**

Change will be expanding of evening service for the entire Link route if the Ann Arbor DDA approves its portion of the funding for the Link.

Copies of maps and timetables for the route changes will soon be available on [www.aata.org](http://www.aata.org), or by contacting AATA at 996-0400.

**WASHTENAW WALKING AND BIKING COALITION:  
WASHTENAW COUNTY ROAD COMMISSION Q&A**

**Q. How does the WCRC decide what roads are to be repaved in a given year? What specific factors are taken into consideration?**

A. We look at the condition of the pavement, traffic volumes, funding sources, local contributions are all some of the items we look at when we decide which roads should be overlaid.

**Q. On roads that are going to be repaved or constructed, how does the WCRC decide which roads will have paved shoulders or bike lanes, and at what point in the process is the decision made? What specific factors are taken into consideration when making the decision?**

A. Generally on all new construction projects we included paved shoulders or wider outside lanes. On resurfacing projects we include paved shoulders on our federally funded projects and on projects we receive funded from our sources, such as the County Parks.



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**Q. Does WCRC dedicate a certain percentage of overall funds to accommodate non-motorized travel? Is there a set lower limit or upper limit? Does the WCRC track how much is spent on non-motorized facilities and, if so, can you provide some figures for recent years?**

A. We are required to spend 1% of MTF revenue on non-motorized facilities. We track this each year, and for the past ten years. During the past ten years total funds spent for non-motorized is over \$6,000,000.

**Q. Can the WCRC apply for federal funding (TEA-21 or equivalent) for non-motorized projects such as bike lanes? If so, how often is this done and what have been the results?**

A. We can apply for federal enhancement funds, for non-motorized facilities, but to date we have not directly applied for those funds. We have applied on behalf of the Townships or County Parks, and we are currently constructing two projects funded with federal enhancement money. One is for the County parks near St. Joseph Hospital and one with Ypsilanti Twp., along Tyler Road.

**Q. Is it possible to have a bike lane or paved shoulders added to a road that is not otherwise scheduled to be repaved? Or to repave just the edge of a road if it has seriously deteriorated?**

A. Adding a paved shoulder to an existing road is not a good maintenance practice, since the joint between the old and new pavements could be a hazard to bikes and motorist. By doing it when we overlay the road, it ties everything together, which is safer and lasts much longer.

**Q. What is the policy of the WCRC towards chip-sealing roads? When and how often is it done, and what kind of roads get this treatment?**

A. Roads that have been overlaid are generally chip-sealing 5-10 years after an overlay.

**Q. Since riding on a chip-sealed surface is, at best, unpleasant for cyclists and, at worst, dangerous (for several days/weeks after it's done), is it possible to chip-seal a road without applying the material to the road shoulder or bike lane or allowing it to accumulate there?**

A. No, we have to apply the chip-seal to the complete road surface.

**Q. What's the best way for cyclists to influence what roads get paved shoulders or bike lanes?**

A. Contact the Road Commission Board and the County Parks Commission and express your desires, and your appreciation for the work that has been done.

**Q. What's the best way for cyclists to notify the WCRC of hazardous road conditions?**

A. Call our main phone number 761-1500, anytime and leave a message after hours or inform our receptionist between 7 and 4.

*Thanks to Roy Townsend, Director of Engineering/County Highway Engineer, for answering our questions.*

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## OZONE ACTION SEASON BEGINS; SEMCOG URGES GOOD HABITS EVERY DAY



SEMCOG, the Southeast Michigan Council of Governments, announces the May 1 start of Ozone Action season in Southeast Michigan. This is the 14th year of the voluntary program that helps keep Southeast Michigan air clean. Ground-level ozone is a result of hot, sunny days. Elevated levels can be a health hazard, particularly for the elderly, the young, and those suffering from respiratory ailments such as emphysema or asthma. Air monitors in Southeast Michigan show that we're in compliance with the national ozone standard. Last year there were a total of 2 ozone action days called where the average year has 10. Also, last year marked the third straight year in which we've had no ozone violations. We need to continue our good habits. Beginning this year, all gasoline sold in Southeast Michigan from June 1 - September 15 will be lower vapor pressure. This fuel is less volatile than conventional gasoline and reduces evaporative emissions. It will help keep the air cleaner.

Southeast Michigan residents can also help keep the air cleaner by doing the following:

- ◆ Try not to refuel on Ozone Action days. On other days when you need to refuel, fill up in the evening when the weather is cooler, and don't "top off" the tank.
- ◆ Keep your vehicle well maintained. It will use less gas (and save you money!) and emit fewer emissions. Be sure your tires are properly inflated too.
- ◆ Reduce automobile use whenever possible. Plan to carpool, use public transit, bike, walk, or work at home.
- ◆ Choose the lawn chair over the lawn mower. Relax on Ozone Action days. On other days, plan to mow your lawn in the evening when the weather is cooler.

*SEMCOG Press Release from [www.semco.org](http://www.semco.org)*

